REMARKS

Claims 1-22 and 47-49 are pending in the present application. Claim 9 was indicated allowable by Examiner if amended to incorporate all limitations of the base and intervening claims; it has been so amended. Reconsideration of the claims is respectfully requested.

The specification has been amended to correct an error. No new matter is believed added, and entry of the amendment is respectfully requested.

I.   35 U.S.C. § 103, Obviousness

The examiner has rejected claims 1-5 and 47-49 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. patent 5,497,370 to Hamada et al.. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

> With regard to claim 1, note that Hamada teaches receiving input
> "to" application data stream O (figure 1) and receiving output from the
> stream based on the input (via the switch on the right side of these
> members) from device ST1 as well as the other devices ST2, etc. wherein
> the only output from the application data stream is shared by the devices.
> Although it is not explicitly stated that the output is provided to the
> plurality of devices at substantially the same time, the concurrent
> operation of each of the switches ST1, ST2, etc. would make it obvious to
> one of ordinary skill in the art that this would be essentially so.

Applicant respectfully submits that the Hamada reference cited by Examiner fails to teach at least all limitations of claim 1. Claim 1 is reproduced for reference:

1.   A method of communicating between one and a plurality of devices, comprising:

   receiving, from a device, input to an application data stream;

   receiving an output from the application data stream based on the received input and input from the plurality of other devices; and

providing the output to the device and the plurality of devices at
substantially a same time, <u>wherein only the output from the application data</u>
<u>stream is shared by the device and the plurality of devices.</u>

[Emphasis added.]

Examiner cites Hamada on page 2 of the Office action as teaching the claimed language
of, "wherein only the output from the application data stream is shared by the devices."
Applicant respectfully disagrees with this interpretation of Hamada's teaching.

Hamada is directed to a network system with a transmission line that includes a
plurality of transmission channels. Hamada is directed to the distribution of network
signals and does not teach the splitting of an "application data stream." According to
Hamada, these several channels are used such that the incoming network signals are
demultiplexed before being transmitted to individual workstations or devices. This means
that the receiving devices do not all share "an application data stream", but rather are
each capable of recovering a part of the network signal. The channel on which data is
transmitted between Hamada's "transmission equipment" objects is chosen by detecting
the proper receiving channel of the destination transmission equipment. While this
provides a way for Hamada to increase the overall transmission capacity of the network,
this does not teach the limitations of the present invention.

For example, Hamada at col. 3, line 65 et seq. state:

> The channel selection during transmission is attained by detecting the proper
> receiving channel of the destination transmission equipment. Since the present
> case shows that the channel 1 is assigned for receiving purposes to the
> transmission equipment 1 and 4, the channel 2 to the transmission equipment 2
> and 5, and the channel 3 to the transmission equipment 3 and 6, if, for example,
> the transmission equipment 1 is to transmit information to the transmission
> equipment 4, the channel 1 can be used to transmit. If the information is to be
> transmitted to the transmission equipment 3, it must contend for the sending right
> on channel 3.

Thus Hamada appears to teach individual communication between the individual ones of
the transmission equipment, and the particular arrangement of channel connections is

manipulated to increase efficiency. However, this does not appear to teach or suggest the claimed limitations of, "providing the output to the device and the plurality of devices at substantially a same time, <u>wherein only the output from the application data stream is shared by the device and the plurality of devices,</u>" as claimed. [Emphasis added.]

The presently claimed invention is directed to sharing an "application data stream" that provides, for example, shared access to a system resource. As stated in the Specification, page 11, line 19, "Using the present invention, a user on a first client device may have full access to the same data stream as another user on a second client device during the same session." Using the present invention, one client device can provide input to the system resource through the application data stream and both the first client and the second (and others) can receive the system resource output through the application data stream.

Examiner notes that Hamada does not explicitly teach that the output is provided to the plurality of devices at substantially the same time, but seeks to cure this deficiency by arguing that concurrent operation of the switches taught by Hamada "would make it obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art that this would be essentially so."

Applicant respectfully disagrees. Applicant respectfully submits that Hamada does not teach the claimed limitation of, "providing the output to the device and the plurality of devices at substantially a same time," because the transmissions of Hamada are being executed between individual ones of the transmission equipment of Hamada, and is not referring to a plurality of equipment seeking access to a single application data stream. Individual units of Hamada may be able to use the switching network at the same time, as long as channel conflicts do not arise, (for example, Hamada mentions that if ST1 desires to communicate with ST3, ST1 must contend for the channel between them-- see col. 4, lines 5-10, reproduced above). But the teaching of Hamada does not expressly state that multiple units share the information of a data stream at substantially the same time because individual units of Hamada (i.e., ST1-6) do not appear to share a data stream. Instead, data is multiplexed and channels are used in order to maintain separate data, to be received by separate units. If Applicant has overlooked a relevant teaching, it is respectfully requested that such teaching be pointed out with particularity.

Because Hamada is a signal transmission system, the "input" from a device to the network is equivalent to the "output" received by the recipient device. There is no teaching in Hamada of the second claim element "receiving an output from the application data stream based on *the received input and input from the plurality* of other devices"(emphasis added.) Hamada provides no teaching of creating a separate "output" based on multiple "inputs." Thus, there is no teaching of an "output" to be shared by the "device and the plurality of devices".

Based on the above arguments, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 is distinguished from the cited reference. In addition, several other claims are believed allowable on their own merit.

For example, claim 3 states, "wherein the data stream splitter is dynamically constructed to provide shared access to the application data stream." Examiner rejects this claim, stating on page 3 of the Office action, "Cl3: the data stream splitters provide shared access to the data stream."

Applicant respectfully disagrees. Even if the devices ST1...were data stream splitters (which Applicants do not stipulate), there is no teaching or suggestion in Hamada that they are "dynamically constructed to provide shared access to the application data stream." To the contrary, Hamada refers to the devices ST1, etc. as "equipment," and refers to them as having access to certain fixed transmission channels. For example, col. 3, lines 45-48 state

A transmission line O includes a plurality of transmission channels (in the embodiment the number of channels is 3, i.e., c1, c2, c3) each of transmission equipment 1 to 6 effects the reception of information through a certain fixed transmission channel...

These references to fixed transmission channels and equipment teaches away from any use of "dynamically constructed" data stream splitters, as claimed in the present invention. Further, no teaching or suggestion of dynamically constructing data stream splitters is found in Hamada. Therefore, the limitations of claim 3 are believed distinguished from the cited reference.

Examiner rejects independent claims 13-15 referring to the arguments made for rejection of claim 1. Therefore, claims 13-15 are believed distinguished from the cited reference. Likewise, claims 47-49 are also made with reference to the rejection of claim 1 and are also therefore believed allowable according to the arguments presented above. Therefore, all claims are now believed in condition for allowance.

II.   Objection to Claims

The examiner has stated that claim 9 was objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In response, claim 9 has been rewritten to overcome this objection.

III.   Conclusion

It is respectfully urged that the subject application is patentable over the cited references and is now in condition for allowance.

The examiner is invited to call the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number if in the opinion of the examiner such a telephone conference would expedite or aid the prosecution and examination of this application.

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Respectfully submitted,

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